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Thomas Hobbes on Revolution

Mikko Jakonen

1 One confusing element in Hobbes studies, as in all studies concerning classical political theory, is the way we understand the central concepts. Philosophers are sometimes accused of forgetting that concepts do not have universal or trans-historical meanings. The same comment can be made about many historians too, given the mountains of studies that research the historical facts of the concepts that we are using today. For example, when considering revolution from a contemporary or "post-French revolution" viewpoint, the meanings that we attach to the concept of revolution may blind us from understanding the more complex nuances of past events. In fact, as many conceptual historians have demonstrated, it is impossible to understand historical events via contemporary language. We have to become familiar with the true context of the words and sentences. It is arguable that this is best done by examining the language and linguistics of a certain period and closely investigating what were the specific connotations, meanings and semantics of certain important concepts[1].

2 One early Anglo-American promoter of conceptual history, James Farr, has even claimed that political science should be understood as a historical science instead of taking it as a natural science[2]. As an example, this idea is also a contextually conditioned statement. One could ask why only these two are mentioned as possible models for political science, and why political science should need any kind of scientific model to operate. Answering the question "What does Farr mean by his statement?" is possible only via his contemporary context, by investigating who were his opponents and who were the audience of his statement. In contemporary context Farr's argument may sound quite irrelevant and his position in scientific debate at least somewhat old.

3 While the conceptual history with its several variations has become accepted and even praised method of doing political analysis and reflection on the history of political thought, it is good to remember that more traditional ways of doing research on the history of political thought and historiography still exist and produce very high quality research. In fact, most of the recent publications concerning, for example, the English

Civil Wars or the political thought of Thomas Hobbes do not use conceptual history as their principal method of investigation[3].

4 The benefit of the conceptual history, compared to more traditional way of writing history, is that conceptual history makes the researcher and a reader more aware of the political contingency of a certain historical dilemmas. It opens the eyes to several political possibilities and shows that history is not a teleological progress towards a certain outcome, to some "historical fact" as we perceive them. Some conceptual historians, like Quentin Skinner, also emphasize the agency of historical persons, highlighting the intentions of certain actors[4]. Skinner also stresses the rather self-evident fact (from a contemporary viewpoint) that it is important to understand words as deeds (following Wittgenstein), and consider historical statements as speech-acts (following philosophers such as J.L. Austin and John Searle). This makes possible new interpretations and it challenges the old ones[5].

5 However, research done in the field of conceptual history is not a final word and it is not an "objective" universal truth discovered by doing such research. Instead it opens the eyes to the complexities and contingencies of political struggle and political creation that are always interesting – for political scientists at least[6]. Still it is evident that conceptual history is not free from the spell of the teleology. Explaining how a certain concept has developed and changed throughout the history sometimes ends up in rather difficult outcomes that may speak more about the intentions of an author of that particular conceptual history instead of more obvious and commonly shared interpretation[7]. Hence, conceptual history is only a history and any history can always be contested.

6 The inspiration derived from conceptual history can also be used for more philosophically and theoretically orientated research of the history of political thought. While conceptual history requires vast data, long timelines and comparison between several authors, more theoretically orientated research seeks the logic of certain events and especially political theories. The conceptual history tends to forget the philosophical side of the political theory while concentrating on the web of the words' meanings and connotations. Political theory and political philosophy can offer more specified analysis that recognizes the longer traditions and effects of the concepts. In the case of Hobbes, the cause for the usage of certain concepts should not be regarded only from his immediate contemporary context, but also from the longer philosophical discussion that affected his political jargon[8]. Simultaneously it is important to read Hobbes's texts very closely and put aside the historical and contemporary debates of Hobbes's era to reveal the internal logic of his political theory and usage of the concepts.

7 Another aspect that is sometimes lacking from conceptual history is the focus on the invention of new concepts and the intentional multileveled usage of certain concepts. It is evident that political theorists use and "recycle" the classical concepts to contemporary discussions, but also take the benefit from the contemporary meanings and allusions of certain concepts. In these matters conceptual history could learn something from the theory of concept that Deleuze and Guattari offer in the first chapter of their *Que est-ce que la philosophie?* and the way they construct and use concepts in their *Mille Plateaux* for example[9]. Widening the range of conceptual history could also include some Foucault's works in the realm of conceptual history[10]. These examples could give new inspiration to conceptual history and historiography in general.

8 This article does not aim to update conceptual history. Vice versa, the article is a case study that principally concerns two questions The first question is the problem of the

concept of revolution in Hobbes's political philosophy. The second question revolves around whether or not the events of the English Civil Wars were a revolution.

9 When addressing the first question, it is important to consider Hobbes's conception of revolution. The first thing striking a reader is the obvious confusion considering the usage of the concept. Generally it seems that Hobbes did not use the concept of revolution systematically in a political sense. In some texts it has a purely astrological meaning, but others carry more political connotations. Sometimes these political connotations lend their meaning from this very astronomical understanding of revolution, but sometimes revolution has an almost modern meaning with very loose connections to circular motion of the planets. However, political references to the concept of revolution are scarce which is strange since, in the end, Hobbes's political theory is a theory that is principally concerned with such questions as the order of the commonwealth, political stability and political change. Whether Hobbes was revolutionary or counter-revolutionary in his political intentions is another question, but it is evident that the problem of revolution, as we nowadays understand that concept, is present in all his political writings.

10 Hence, the first task of this article is to demonstrate with a careful analysis of the concept of revolution in Hobbes's texts that his understanding of the very concept of revolution was not fully developed in a political sense and it was in a sense confused. This poses questions for some conceptual historians, such as Koselleck[11] (2004), who take certain definitions of the concept of revolution from Hobbes and attach those meanings to the larger historical narrative, but forget at the same time the other sides of Hobbes's concept of revolution that do not fit so easily to such otherwise illustrative conceptual histories. Nevertheless, at the time of Hobbes the concept of revolution did not have those modern connotations we attach to it now. This poses certain questions for Hobbes' scholars such as Collins, who argue that Hobbes was "revolutionary" and that he wrote at the age of revolution, namely the English Revolution. This article claims that we should be quite sensitive to Hobbes's own understanding concerning the events that he lived through and the concepts he used since this helps us to a better understanding of Hobbes's political thought.

11 This first question of this article is contextualised by another, more contemporary question. Looking at the history of the history of English Civil Wars it becomes clear that the very name or title of those historical events has been a part of the politics of naming and hence, the politics of the past. In fact, the name of the events in England between 1641-1651, or more generally between 1640-1660, is not self-evident[12]. Many historians use the simple term the English Civil War or the English Civil Wars[13]. There is, however, a great number of studies in which this era is called the English revolution[14]. The English revolution is also sometimes used as a title that encompasses even a wider period of time from the end of the 16th century to the beginning of 18th century[15]. These studies understand English revolution as a general title for events that profoundly changed English society and it's political, religious and economical structures.

12 Naming historical events gives certain political connotations to past events and forms our political interpretations concerning them. For example, titles like *Puritan revolution* or *Bourgeois revolution* can be attached to the English Civil Wars. Here the naming depends on what kind of subject is seen to be at the centre of the Civil War. When talking about Puritan revolution, the understanding is the Puritans were a force that tried to overcome (alleged) despotic Monarchy of Charles I. When one talks about Bourgeois revolution, it seems to state that the English Civil Wars were some kind of class wars fought between

King and Bourgeois traders and manufacturers. Both of these interpretations are in a sense too narrow, although both of them include some good perspectives to the period of English Civil Wars.

13 Hence, the second question of this article, which refers to the first question and especially to Collins argument, is the question of whether the English Civil Wars was a revolution or not. This question is in fact a question of the politics of modern historiography. In some sense, the English Civil Wars were not a revolution. It was more like a series of wars and ruptures in the English political and social system. Some of these ruptures were more important and interesting than others, but they all participated in shaping the new era that finally led to the Glorious Revolution and in some sense to the French Revolution, too. Perhaps the most important point in the events of the English Civil Wars was the toppling of absolute monarchy and the establishment of republican Commonwealth of England. The Commonwealth of England lasted only four years (1649-1653).

14 Yet in the wider perspective, those who support the idea of English revolution have their point too. From a contemporary viewpoint, the time was certainly "revolutionary" and so were the outcomes. In the end it is the way we name those past events and how we understand the concepts we are using. It seems important to comprehend that revolutions have not always been the same. There is no certain pattern of revolution that repeats itself throughout the history. Revolutions change and the way that people understand the very concept of revolution changes.

15 This article analyzes firstly the concept of revolution used by Hobbes in the context of the English Civil Wars and secondly the historiography of the English Civil Wars. It seriously considers the obvious contradiction between Hobbes's understanding of revolution and modern scholars interpretations of the English Civil Wars. The article claims that modern historiography and modern Hobbes scholarship should, as conceptual historians have noted, be very sensitive to such basic concepts as revolution, state, democracy, and sovereignty. However, this article does not mesh with the traditional conceptual history but instead argues that the analysis of the history of political thought and political theory calls for a more philosophical analysis than conceptual history can offer. Hence, by analyzing Hobbes's conception of revolution, this article brings some new elements to the larger discussion on the politics of history and conceptual history.

16 This article starts by considering the English Civil Wars and its historiography. Should we understand these Civil Wars as a revolution in a modern sense? What are the arguments for calling these Civil Wars a revolution? These questions briefly describe the contemporary context of historiography, which also frames research done on Hobbes. The article then continues by analyzing Hobbes's own political writings and considering the possibility of the concept of revolution in them. It explains how Hobbes's conception of revolution stands on the threshold between the ancient, early modern and the modern conceptions of revolution. This part of the article is divided in to four different sections following the chronological order of his major works *The Elements of Law* (1640), *Leviathan* (1651), *De Corpore* (1655) and *Behemoth* (1668) where the concept of revolution appears. Lastly the article concludes by asking what modern historiography can learn from the analysis done in the terms of conceptual history and political philosophy/theory.

1. English Civil Wars: a Revolution?

17 The English Civil Wars took place between 1642-1651. The war was not continuous, but instead it raged in three separate episodes: the first 1642-1646, the second 1648-1649 and the third 1649-1651. These were not the only periods of war in 17th century Britain. The time both before and after the English Civil Wars was marked by violence and political outbursts. The Glorious Revolution (1688) can be understood only in the light of the English Civil Wars and in a way it was a continuum of these Civil Wars. Here the focus, however, is only on the English Civil Wars and the time of the Long Parliament, 1640-1660.

18 Jeffrey R. Collins has addressed the issue of the English Civil Wars in his book *The Allegiance of Thomas Hobbes*, published in 2007. Collins interprets Hobbes's political theory in the context of English Civil Wars and the age of Long Parliament. His focus is on the religious discourses and debates, which infected and developed Hobbes's political theory as the revolution wore on. Collins sees Hobbes as a strong defender of Erastianism, which he certainly was, a doctrine that believed that the church ought to be a subject of the State and sovereign power. Collins' fundamental new claim in Hobbes scholarship is that Hobbes was more sympathetic to the church revolution promoted by Cromwell and the Independents than has been thought before. Collins goes as far as stating that Hobbes was not in fact royalist, but rather "wrote in sympathy with broad religio-political ends of the English Revolution". However, in a more general level of historiography Collins wants to put "the dominant revisionist interpretation of the English Revolution" in question by claiming that the revisionist interpretation has not been paying enough attention to multiple religious, theological and ecclesiastical matters[16].

19 Even though historiographers such as Collins nowadays use (again) the concept of English Revolution, many Hobbes scholars have been more careful with the term before. Usually the period that infected Hobbes's political thought so profoundly has been simply called the *English Civil War*[17]. The more detailed and precise expression of *English Civil Wars* is also used[18].

20 Collins however, as already stated, emphasizes the interpretation based on revolution. First he states that Hobbes should be understood as a "revolutionary" theorist. Second he claims that English Civil Wars should be understood as a revolution. He writes:

> "If, however, the English Civil War is understood as a watershed moment in defining the nature of the British kingdoms as Christian polities, the term «Revolution» seems much more suitable. The demolition of a millennium-old ecclesial structure, the psychologically shattering advent of pervasive religious pluralism, the earliest efforts to make the individual the arbiter of religious obligation: these represented epochal transformations. And when accompanied by mass violence and regime change, such transformations merit the designation «revolution»"[19].

21 Generally it can be claimed that the usage of the concept of revolution is very complex with many good arguments in favour of it. On the other hand, historiographers should consider more seriously what persons who lived in that period thought about the concept of revolution themselves. In another words, the viewpoint of conceptual history should be taken seriously even though one does not want to completely engage in it. The case of Hobbes and revolution is a good example, since his understanding of revolution stands in somewhat contradictory relation to Collins' arguments for the usage of the concept of

revolution, as this article proves. Before going to the analysis of Hobbes's conception of revolution, it is useful to take a look at the different ways of writing about the English Civil Wars throughout history. This explains the complexity of naming and understanding the events of the past such as this and hence, it explains the political tensions attached to historiography and history of political thought as well.

22 Collins makes a distinction between three different interpretations of the English Civil Wars, or, of English Revolution. The first interpretation of the English Civil Wars is the Puritan one. The "Puritan Revolution" or "Whiggish Puritan Revolution" sees the radicalized Protestant party as an actor that enforced modernity on the collapsing *ancien régime*. Collins calls this line of interpretation the *constitutionalist* interpretation. Another line of interpretation, the *materialist* one, derives from the Marxist tradition. Here Puritanism was a symptom of a more profound rupture in the English society. The Marxists claim that the English Civil Wars were a class war, where Puritans played the role of (rising) bourgeoisie. These two lines of interpretation, which emphasize religion as a sign of social and economical changes, are contested by the *revisionist* interpretation[20].

23 Historian John Adamson's has summarized some main phases of the historiography of the English Civil Wars in the introduction of the book *The English Civil War: Problems in Focus*[21]. According to him the royalists and their followers referred the Civil Wars for a long time in the English political thought as a "Great Rebellion". The name of "Civil War", used as an alternative for the Great Rebellion, was linked instead to the partisan implications as late as 1930's. The Tory-Whig divide, partly produced by the English Civil Wars, still had a very strong influence on the British political imaginary during the 20th century.

24 Adamson argues that the story of the histories of the English Civil Wars begins properly from the historical work by Samuel Gardiner, who published his *History of the Great Civil War1642-1649* in three volumes between 1886 and 1891. Gardiner's sympathies were on parliament's side, as he concluded that the English Civil Wars were a constitutional process in which the Puritans played a crucial role. Hence, the English Civil Wars could be called a *Puritan Revolution*. Gardiner also presented the idea of "three Kingdoms" as a key to understand the dynamics of the English Civil Wars. The three kingdoms argument emphasized the role of religion not only between but also within the three kingdoms of England, Scotland and Ireland.

25 Unlike Collins, Adamson also highlights the Weberian tradition of interpreting the English Civil Wars. Gardiner was influenced by German philosophy, and the second wave of interpretation was influenced more or less by German sociology. Max Weber's *The Protestantic Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* widely influenced English historiography. Weber's theory emphasizes the role of the protestant middle-classes as the driving force of modern historical change. The Protestant middle-classes, the bourgeois and petty bourgeois, had a strong influence on the struggle against the feudal system, which Weber always sees as the opposite of modern capitalist system, represented by the absolute monarchy and the nobles[22]. Hence, the English Civil Wars saw the rise of the English gentry. Protestantism was a progressive religion and the carrier of modern, capitalist and anti-feudal values and lifestyles. The Protestants and the Puritan gentry (and their representatives, the Commons) were seen as the winners of the Civil Wars and hence as progressive and dynamic forces. Royalists instead were seen as the losers in the long term and as a static or retrogressive (conservative) power. Between 1870 and 1970, this dichotomy heavily influenced the historiography of the English Civil Wars. One of the

authors of this genre is R.H. Tawney's with his *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*, published in 1926[23].

26 The third line of interpretation in Adamson's analysis derives from the Marxist idea of history. As Marx's texts were translated into English they started to impact the British historiography in the middle of the 20th century. From a Marxian perspective The English Civil Wars happened in a very interesting period of history, which seemed to need a profound new investigation on the basis of class struggle and class dynamics. According to Adams, the Marxist historiography of the English Civil Wars was a "test" that was about to prove to the world the real value of the Marxist historiography. The Marxists' historiography was not totally different from historiography influenced by Weber. These Weberian and Marxian lines of thought were dominant in the English historiography until the late 1970's and the beginning of the 1980's. The Marxist and Weberian approaches also concentrate on the social context of the gentry and these studies were prominently micro-historical, seeking the community dynamics of social change. A number of studies on gentry and county were published.

27 After highest Marxian and Weberian waves the 1970's introduced new views to the historiography of the English Civil Wars since the radical generation of 1968 began to look for minor agents of the Civil Wars such as Levellers, Diggers and Ranters. The biggest reform of the 1970's in the historiography was, however, the rise of the revisionist historiography that wanted to correct deficits of the previous generations and German influenced historiography.

28 Hence, the fourth line of the historiography of the English Civil Wars is the revisionist one. Among the best-known revisionist writers are Conrad Russell, Nicholas Tyacke, John Morrilla, Kevin Sharpe, Mark Kishlansky and Paul Christianson. Although they do not have a common method or approach, the revisionists are connected by their negativity towards the grand narratives of Marxists (social change produces social conflict) and the Whigs (Puritans as a progressive force). They also oppose the implicit teleology of the older accounts.

29 The revisionists also share some other common starting points. They question the idea of the English society as somehow fragile and fragmented before the English Civil Wars. Instead they stress the good order of the society before 1640. They downplay the secular ideological controversy before Civil Wars, too. They also emphasize the accidental nature of the conflict. Modernisation was seen as an outcome of the civil war, not vice versa as the Whig historiography had thought. While the Whiggish and the Marxist historiographers see the English Civil War as revolutionary right from the beginning, the revisionists argue that the revolution started only after December 1648. The civil war is seen more as an accident than as a conscious action. Instead of long-term derivation or long-term causes of Civil Wars, the revisionists emphasize the contingency as an explanation.

30 This short overview of the historiography of the English Civil Wars explains how the question of the name of the English Civil Wars is still a problematic and a political one. Returning to the case of Collins, it is almost impossible to say what kind of political argument Collins makes by calling the English Civil Wars the English Revolution. Is he calling the English Civil Wars the English Revolution because he is a Marxist, or does he understand the events as something that have a connotation to the modern concept of revolution? If he makes, as the back-page of the book states, a revisionist interpretation of Hobbes's political thought, why is he not more careful with the concept of revolution?

Whatever his intentions and interpretations are, it is certain that Collins has some kind of an answer to the question: why revolution?

2. Hobbes's conception of revolution

31 Describing the general outlines of the English Civil Wars, Hobbes often uses the word "rebellion"[24]. Those who organized the mutiny against the king, who fought in the army of Presbyterians and who tried to change the constitution of England from monarchical to democratic, were all rebellious people. There were certain factions and certain parties that can be separated from each other and all these factions had different interests and different reasons. In *Behemoth*[25]Hobbes lists seven different factions:

1. Ministers of Christ (Presbyterians)
2. Papists
3. Different religious sects that claimed that they have liberty of religion such as Independents, Anabaptists, Fifth-monarchy-men, Quakers, Adamites: "And these were the enemies which arose against his Majesty from the private interpretation of the Scripture, exposed to every man's scanning in his mother-tongue"[26].
4. "Men of the better sort": educated men who believed in classical writers that named democracy as liberty and monarchy as tyranny. Most of these men were at the House of Commons and had been educated in the Universities.
5. Large trade cities like London that imitated the example of the Low Countries in their rebellion against Spain.
6. Poor people who were "able bodies, but saw no means to honestly to get their bread"[27]. These people were ready to fight for money.
7. Ignorant men, who didn't know their rights and duties towards King.

32 Based on these seven factions, Hobbes sees the English Civil Wars mostly as the "headless" mutiny of the multitude. In Hobbes's opinion, a people, understood as a unity, was shattered into multitude, a crowd or a mob. People lost their ability to comprehend what is best for the Commonwealth and instead started to think of what is best for them. This kind of egoism is the clearest sign of the state of nature, a concept that clearly refers to the English Civil Wars[28]. In Hobbes's opinion, the real "state of nature" reigned between 1640 and 1660, at the age of English Civil Wars.

33 However, Hobbes's idea of rebellion, especially in *Behemoth*, is in fact divided. On one hand he sees that it was primarily Presbyterians who organized the mutiny against the King. On the other hand, he sees civil wars as some sort of chaos, definitely comparable to the Peloponnesian wars documented by Thucydides. The political structure of the commonwealth shatters and war of every one against every one reigns. What ever the true subject of the English Civil Wars was, Hobbes does not decide what or who they were. He does not simply name the revolutionary subject or class, as the later writers of the English Civil Wars have done. For Hobbes the whole period seems to be too mixed and obscure for it becomes very difficult to name one leading group as responsible – although it seems his finger points sometimes quite harshly to the Presbyterians.

34 Like Reinhart Koselleck has noted, before the French Revolution, the concept of revolution did not mean the same thing as rebellion. Bloody struggles that aimed to topple the former King were defined with such words as "uprising", "revolt", "riot", "insurrection", "rebellion" and "civil war". However, these concepts did not exclude each

other. The term "revolution" had an astronomical meaning, because the course of the revolution was in a sense predetermined. Revolution had a meaning of repetition and returning. Rebellion referred perhaps to the uprising of the people, but those people did not understand themselves as true subjects of these "revolutions". As Hannah Arendt has defined this problem in her book *On Revolution*, it was perhaps difficult to describe the action where the subjects became rulers, that is, revolutionary action as we now call it[29]. What could be experienced were a rebellion and civil war, but not a revolution[30].

35 Perhaps for these general reasons, among other more detailed reasons, the concept of revolution, unlike rebellion, is a very rare concept in Hobbes's texts. In *The Elements of Law* he uses it only once and in *De Cive* the word revolution is not even mentioned. In *Leviathan* , Hobbes introduces the term revolution on the very last page of the book. *De Corpore* introduces a very astronomical understanding of revolution and *Behemoth* politically echoes this astronomical understanding. In next four sections Hobbes's usage of the concept of revolution is analysed chronologically starting from his earliest political text *The Elements of Law* and ending to his last political text *Behemoth*. This chronological research offers a possibility to reflect on the development of the concept of revolution in Hobbes political thought and to analyze how the changes in political constellations might have effected to Hobbes's usage of the very concept. However, the events of the Civil Wars did not necessarily influence that much to Hobbes's conceptions.

2.1. The Elements of Law – Revolution or Rebellion?

36 The concept of revolution appears in the *English Works IV* that includes *The Elements of Law*, as two separate texts *Human Nature* and *De Corpore Politico*. Here the title of *De Corpore Politico* is following:

> "De Corpore Politico or the Elements of Law, Moral and Politic, with discourses upon several heads: as Of The Law of Nature; of Oaths and Covenants; of Several Kinds of Government; with The Changes and Revolutions of Them"[31].

37 Even though the term revolution appears in the title, the term "revolution" is not used once in the text of *De Corpore Politico* itself. However, the title *De Corpore Politico* provides an opportunity to interpret *The Elements of Law* as if it explains something about revolution.

38 *De Corpore Politico* consists of ten chapters, all concerning political issues starting from the formation of a Commonwealth, ending with the reasons that tend to break a Commonwealth down. Some of the chapters discuss the relationship between sovereign, church and divine authority[32]. Especially chapters II and VIII delve into the kinds of matters that can be linked to the concept of revolution. In Chapter II of *De Corpore Politico*, Hobbes presents his idea of the relationship between democracy, aristocracy and monarchy. This chapter also concerns, along with the chapter I, the generation, or in Hobbesian language, the institution of the Commonwealth. Chapter VIII deals with another classical theme, the corruption or dissolution of the commonwealth. Hobbes comments on the very classical theme concerning the birth and death of the body politic, the generation and corruption of the political power in Chapter VIII. Classically this question had semi-mystical and naturalistic answers along with political, ethical and economical answers. Hobbes's answers differ significantly from earlier approaches. To understand more concretely what kind of arguments Hobbes was opposing with his

political theory it is important to review what ancient and early modern philosophers thought about the regime change and "revolutions".

2.1.1. Classical and Early Modern Ideas Concerning the Regime Change and "Revolutions"

39 The transformation of the modes or forms of government is a classic theme derived from the philosophies of Plato, Aristotle and Polybius as well as from other Greek and Roman philosophers. The time after Peloponnesian Wars was very unstable in Athens. The whole era of the democratic Athens was characterised by constant changes in forms of government as well as in changes of political leaders too. The same can be said about the era of Roman civil wars.

40 Philosophers of the classical era provided a variety of answers while explaining why certain regimes went into turmoil and why they destroyed or changed to new forms. At least three different sets of explanations can be distinguished. The first of these are the socio-economic, political and moral explanations deriving from classical thought. The second set of explanations consists of mystical and natural explanations. The third set of explanations derives from Christian ideas of time and especially ending of times.

41 The first set of explanations can be described as sociological, economical and moral reasons for political change. As a first example, Plato's main task was to fight against this constant change of regimes and leaders in Athens and to stabilise the movement of the society. In *Republic* he describes how different types of people and personalities are the cause of different forms of government[33]. He offers a solution where the hierarchies inside the state are built in a way that only the best possible princes can come to power. As the classic cave parable teaches, the philosophers should be the kings/princes because they do not actually want to be kings. In short, all those who want to govern because they have a will to govern, should be guided to other offices and only those who live a truly philosophical and virtuous life should govern the people. Plato's critique is definitely directed against such demagogies as Alcibiades, and perhaps against Pericles, too[34]. The same problem is analyzed also in Plato's *Seventh letter*, where he explains his journeys and political aims in Sicily[35]. In this sense, the political question that Plato poses is the one of right persons as leaders and right virtues of the leaders. Bad governors cause political instability, which reveals in fact the whole rotten social structure of *polis*, where the principle of justice (*dike*) is lost.

42 The second example in this set of explanations concerns more political and economical reasons for political change. This example comes from Aristotle's *Politics*. Aristotle shows how different forms of government generate from one to another, and on the other hand, how they degenerate to unwanted forms of government. Hence, *politeia*, the government of the citizens is turned into democracy, the government of the people, or in the extreme case to the government of the multitude. Aristocracy, the rule of "the good" becomes oligarchy. Monarchy, the rule of the one becomes despotism[36]. The reasons for corruption of certain states are partly the same as with Plato, but Aristotle is much more verbal about different socio-economical reasons for political turmoil. The ultimate difference and antagonism between rich and poor call for a sort of middlemen, a middle class that equalizes and mediates the antagonism between "the good" and "the bad".

43 While both of these aforementioned examples of "revolutions" are very sociological and in that sense modern[37], classical thought also used more mystical and natural ideas

concerning the relationship between cosmological and political change. The second set of explanations for political change derives from this discourse. Plato especially has mystical and cosmological interpretations for the changes of political regimes. Aristotle does not explain the change of regimes by historical teleology, although he has some semi-mystical explanations concerning the best possible *polis* and some kind of an idea of eternal cycle of cosmos. Greek historian Polybius continues these cosmo-political explanations in his *Histories*. As Aristotle and Plato, Polybius had a cyclical idea of history, meaning that cosmological changes and cycles affected the political regimes[38].

44 One example of mystical explanations can be found in the myth of the *Statesman* where Plato describes the "golden age" where people lived under the direct guidance of God. Due the cosmological change this golden age ended and the beginning of history where men are born of men, began[39]. The same kind of story can be identified in the *Old Testament* where the evolution of state-forms is documented starting from the direct guidance of the God and developing later to the power of prophets, ministers and kings.

45 In addition to the mystical and theological explanations, the aforementioned cosmo-political and natural explanations were very typical in antiquity. Polybius is perhaps the one who writes most clearly of these matters:

> "Now the first of these to come into being is monarchy, its growth being natural and unaided; the next arises kingship derived from monarchy by the aid of art and by the correction of defects. Monarchy first changes into its vicious allied form, tyranny; and next, the abolishment of both gives birth to aristocracy; and when the commons inflamed by anger take vengeance on this government for its unjust rule, democracy comes in to being; and in due course the licence and lawlessness of this form of government produces mob-rule (*ochlokratia*) to complete the series. The truth of what I have just said will be quite clear to anyone who pays due attention to such beginnings, origins, and changes as are in each case natural"[40].

46 Later, after he subtly defines how regimes change, Polybius considers revolution: "Such is the cycle of political revolution, the course appointed by nature in which constitutions change, disappear, and finally return to the point from which they started"[41]. It is noteworthy that for Polybius the first form of political regime was monarchy. Only after monarchy (in ancient Greek meaning literally the rule of the one) came kingship.

47 As these two sets of explanations show, these themes of political turmoil, regime change and political generation and corruption were a central theme for classic political thought and most of the writers have some sort of answer to these questions. For Aristotle, who saw the *polis* as an outcome of some sort of natural development[42], the big question is how to prevent the corruption of the *polis* by political action. The same is true with Plato. Along with economic, sociologic and moral explanations, that is, explanations that concern the behaviour of human beings, is a cyclical understanding of time and history, which unquestionably affected classical political thought. These cosmological, theological and natural explanations formed the background for all classical political philosophy. For any political philosopher of Greek and Rome it seems almost impossible to escape from this cosmological cycle. Political art may have included the idea of hastening or slowing the cosmo-political metamorphoses but there is no evidence of the idea of totally leaping out of the natural and cosmological cycle, which is typical of modern revolutions as Koselleck has pointed out[43].

48 Along with classical explanations of regime change there are also Christian and early modern ideas. These explanations concern the problem of time, or more precisely, the ending of times. Hence the third set of explanations to regime change derives from the

contemplations on linear versus cyclical time. One example of this is the emergence of new scientific thought. After the astronomical and scientific revolution, the scientific innovation of lasting linear movement and following from this, lasting linear time replaced the ancient cosmological and political thought. While the cyclical idea of history and time fitted well with aristotelic-ptolemaic world system, the introduction of linear movement and time caused serious troubles for older cosmological understanding.

49 Of course, philosophers of antiquity were familiar with linear time in their own terms. However, as another example, it is Christianity, not scientific revolution that originally broke the natural cycle of time typical to antiquity. Christian theology speaks of the return of the Christ, but at the same time it is very clearly manifested that everything will be different from the first time. The first time that Christ was on the earth was a preparatory visit. The second coming would be redeeming. Waiting for the second coming of Christ and the coming of the City of God, as church father Augustine described it, is definitely a break from the old conception of time that was typical for antiquity. If the Christian idea of time is not straightforwardly linear, it is, however, more or less a spiral. Time may develop in circles, but these circles are not closed. According to the Christian view, time as we know it will end and a totally new kind of time, or eternity, will begin. It is the Christian imagination that brings with it a new idea of the end of time[44], which has both negative and positive consequences. Eschatology, escaping from this particular time and space, is definitely a Christian idea that has caused, directly or indirectly, so many revolts and rebellions throughout Christian history[45].

50 As a third example of the third set of explanations for regime change is the obvious dissonance between Christian and traditional time conceptions, which is manifested in a political way in the writings of Niccolò Machiavelli. Machiavelli, although he was a contemporary of the astronomical and scientific revolution, does not place those new ideas in his political philosophy. Instead he draws his inspiration from classical Roman histories, as his *Discourse of the First Ten Books of Titus Livy* proves[46]. Still, even though Machiavelli gathers his inspiration from the classics of antiquity, such as Polybius, his political imagination and language is mixed already with the Christian conception of time. As Paul-Erik Korvela shows Machiavelli understood that religious sects have the same kind of life spans as political regimes[47]. Earlier sects have vanished because new ones who, reasonably enough, try to erase the memory of the old religion. Based on this kind of understanding Machiavelli calculated, as did many of his contemporaries that the Christian religion should come to an end about 150 years after his time. Anticipation of the fall of the Christian religion was based on astrological calculations and a sort of tradition that awaited the rise of a new religion and political order.

51 Machiavelli's works acknowledge his comprehension of some sort of cyclical time, which had its inspiration in both pagan and Christian tradition. Cyclical time and the cycle of religious as well as political order, however, are not causal reasons for the present political situation. Machiavelli sees that political actors also have their word to say in the course of things. Machiavelli views that religions and republics should be returned to their origins. This idea includes the regaining of the original powers of the republic. Hence, this kind of revolution, although the very term was still lacking, is a very modern one, yet at the same time it is very old. The aim of "rinnovazione", a term that Machiavelli uses instead of "revolution", is the restoration and renovation of original powers of the republic. Furthermore, Machiavelli already has an idea of a revolutionary subject. The prince who is extraordinary has the capability to bring to order, ordinary

life, in the republic. Innovator, a substitute for revolutionary, is the one who prevents the negative innovations of the citizens and classes. This kind of action can resist *fortuna*, if anything. Paradoxically, to retain the stability of the republic or religion, the republic and religions must maintain the capability to reform themselves. According to Machiavelli, constant change, following historical cycles, is the only way to keep the power[48].

52 As these three sets of classical and early modern explanations for regime change explain, political change has always been connected to some larger historical, mystical or religious cycles. Although classical and early modern philosophers did see that political change always calls for real action of individual and political sects, they, however, believed that political change was part of some larger cosmological changes beyond the human powers. It is against this tradition that Hobbes builds his argument concerning the generation and corruption of the Commonwealth.

2.1.2. *De Corpore Politico*, Chapter II: The Generation of the Commonwealth

53 In Chapter I of *De Corpore Politico*, Hobbes explains his basic ideas of social contract. The social contract is an act where political power and constitution is erected "out of nothing". Political power can also be acquired by conquest, but the political power by institution was more important for Hobbes. The act of a social contract is the form of the political life. In social contract the sovereign state steps out from the chaos of the a-political, and a-historical multitude.

54 In Chapter II Hobbes explains the order in which different forms of government, democracy, aristocracy and monarchy, take place after the sovereign power is erected. There has been considerable discussion concerning Hobbes's view of democracy and the basis of his conception of political order[49]. In *De Corpore Politico* Hobbes is quite clear. The special form of the contract, the covenant, forms the body politic. The first mode of legitimate government is in the historical and logical order the democracy:

> "The first in order of time of these three sorts, is democracy, and it must be so of necessity, because an aristocracy and a monarchy, require nomination of persons agreed upon, which agreement in the great multitude of men, must consist in the consent of the major part; and where the votes of the major part involve the votes of the rest, there is actually a democracy"[50].

55 What should be noted here are the changes from one form of government to another. The change from a multitude (in a state of nature) to a people (*demos*) is the work of man's political skills and art. It is an outcome of vote where the major part gives its voice and authority to a democratic meeting. There is no historical *telos* or necessity involved in this act. In other words the democratic meeting could take place or not, and in fact, this is the whole dilemma of political order in general. Democracy, or any other form of government, was not "meant to be" historically or cosmologically. Hobbes does not give any hint of this kind of possibility. For Hobbes, society or political order does not exist "naturally". Democracy is first in order historically and logically since otherwise it would be impossible for Hobbes to argue as he does in his theory of social contract. Whether Hobbes is right or wrong in his theory, is not important. Rather it is the logic that he sets against the classical understanding concerning the erection, development and changing of the state-forms that is interesting.

56 The cause for change from democracy to aristocracy or monarchy is the political action of a people. Organized as a body politic, as a democratic meeting, a people has the possibility to govern itself as a democracy or to continue to more sophisticated, secure and effective

ways of governing. It is needless to analyze of democracy's faults, because the main reason why democracy should be avoided is that democracy is so close to the multitude and the state of nature – that is the absence of all political rule. In a way, democracy is at a constant danger of falling back to the state of nature. Hence, people have to develop their political governance further. Building up an aristocracy or a monarchy is realised by another contract that the people make with sovereign power, such as monarch.

57 To build up a monarchy, what are needed are two contracts; first the constitutive contract that separates a people from the multitude and then a transfer of a people's power to a sovereign such as a monarch. These kinds of contracts are understood here as development and hence part of peoples free deliberation. Moving from one state-form to another is not dependent on a cosmological or natural cycle, or on the corruption of certain persons. It is, primarily, because men are willing to develop their commonwealths.

58 Nevertheless, it should be noted that in *Elements of Law* an aristocracy or monarchy are not possible in Hobbes' scheme without democracy, as Hobbes says: "seeing a democracy is by institution, the beginning both of aristocracy and monarchy"[51]. For this reason it is possible that monarchy or aristocracy may return to a previous form, democracy. Here sovereign power would not be in the hands of the monarch anymore, but instead a democratic concert would have to gather together again. Yet it is important that people cannot demand the power back from the sovereign and the people are not a distinct entity of the sovereign power even in the monarchy. In this way Hobbes denies the possibility that people could by rebellion take the power back legally. Quite contrary, it is far more possible that the whole social contract, that is sovereignty, vanishes than that it returns to the hands of democratic concert ever again.

2.1.3. *De Corpore Politico*, Chapter VIII: The Corruption of The Commonwealth

59 Things leading to the dissolution of the commonwealth are analyzed more deeply in chapter VIII of *De Corpore Politico*. Here rebellion is the main subject of the chapter and it is linked to the very destruction of commonwealth. It seems that Hobbes simply wants to explain how rebellion is always wrong in the commonwealth and following from this, he ends up to condemn rebellious action.

60 Hobbes states that the reasons for rebellion are discontent, pretence and hope of success. Hobbes writes: "when the same are all together, there wanteth nothing thereto, but a man of credit to set up the standard, and to blow trumpet"[52]. Here again, the internal reason for the dissolution of commonwealth can be found from people's action and from human nature particularly. Even though Hobbes is known for his deterministic idea of politics, where civil strife derives ultimately from human nature, Hobbes does not offer a totally "natural" or deterministic explanation for the dissolution of the commonwealth. In fact, in the commonwealth human nature as itself is not enough to produce anything: political activity and even political philosophy is needed to bring out the effect – wanted or unwanted – from human nature.

61 In addition to human activity, rebellion also needs political organization. When describing the third general reason for rebellion, the hope of success, Hobbes separates four different conditions: "I. That the discontented have mutual intelligence; II. That they have a sufficient number; III. That they have arms; IV. That they agree upon a head"[53]. What happens when these conditions are fulfilled is the formation of a sort of body politic

inside the body politic. Only an organized group of people can attack the sovereign power inside the commonwealth. Other than these things, good orators are needed who spread the word of rebellion and turn people against the sovereign. Hobbes claims that human nature starts to work in favour of bad intentions if there is no political education and organization opposing those agitating forces.

62 From Hobbes's analysis of the causes of rebellion it becomes clear that what we nowadays call a revolutionary action, is for Hobbes a rebellion. Hobbes, however, totally condemns this kind of action. Comparing rebellion and rebellious plans to Ovidius story of *Medea* from *Metamorphoses* Hobbes claims that rebellions never succeed in restoring the original powers of Commonwealth or of creating a new one:

> "The daughters of Pelias, king of Thessaly, desiring to restore their old decrepit father to the vigour of his youth, by councel of Medea, chopped him in pieces, and set him a boiling with I know not what herbs in a cauldron, but could not revive him again. So when eloquence and want of judgement go together, want of judgement, like the daughters of Pelias, consenteth, through eloquence, which is as the witchcraft of Medea, to cut the commonwealth in pieces, upon pretence or hope of reformation, which when things are in combustion, they are not able to effect"[54].

63 Rebellion will not to work, says Hobbes in *The Elements of Law*. In another words, rebellions will never turn out to be revolutions. He is definitely against any revolutionary action, since the end will be a civil war, anarchy and the state of nature – not restored or reformed powers of commonwealth.

64 Hobbes uses the metaphor of the body politic in a very literal sense. He explains the commonwealth as a person, which has a birth, life and an end. It is possible, as he writes in *Leviathan*, that a commonwealth might exist for a very long period of time. However, it is certain that when a commonwealth dissolves, it cannot be re-erected. The Leviathan is a mortal God, not immortal. This is why rebellion is the same as suicide or a fatal disease to a human being. Rebellion, or revolutionary action, does not have any good outcomes and, hence, in *The Elements of Law* Hobbes does not write about revolution in the modern sense of the concept[55]. Rebellion is an action, that might dissolve the commonwealth, but it will certainly not bring it to another level or develop it.

65 It is quite understandable that Hobbes does not write about revolution in a contemporary meaning, yet it is even more striking that he attacks older ideas of the cycles of political regimes. It is clear that Hobbes did not support the cosmological ideas of Plato, Aristotle or Polybius. Unlike them, Hobbes argues that the life span of the State is linear. He never refers to the possibility of metamorphoses from one form to another as a historical pattern. Instead human beings have to be very careful with what they do in commonwealths since it is possible that whole sovereignty, which brings all the wealth and development of the earth, can totally vanish.

66 However, something returns after human societies are gone: the state of nature and the true end of history, that is, a-political and a-historical time. But this vision differs radically from former cyclical explanations that always expect some sort of re-cycle. For Hobbes the Commonwealth is a singular phenomenon that may last almost indefinitely, but it will not go through several cycles and transformations of the state-forms. Hobbes's understanding of political and religious cycles also differs from Machiavelli's. As Hobbes explains in *Leviathan,* what stands before and after the life of the Commonwealth is a sort of secular eternity, a time when people, if there happen to be any, will not have a proper understanding of time[56]. Hence it can be stated that Hobbes's understanding is Christian

in a sense that it engages to the linear conception of time and neglects cycles. Still, he does not wait for the second coming of Christ or the ending of time but instead demands that we should take hold of what we have in this corporeality, this time, this commonwealth. These are the realistic conditions of good politics for Hobbes in *The Elements of Law*. Revolution, in the classical and modern meanings, is definitely missing. Thus, the political message to his contemporaries before the English Civil Wars was that mutiny and rebellion would not bring any good results. The only change that Hobbes could imagine was the dissolution of the state, which was definitely a bad outcome in his eyes. Many of his contemporaries had totally different opinions.

2.2. *Leviathan* – A Modern Revolution?

67 As Hobbes wrote the *The Elements of Law* he engaged himself with the political battles that lead finally to first period of war in the English Civil Wars. For Hobbes this meant dangerous times and in late 1640 he concluded that is was best to become an immigrant in Paris. Hobbes stayed in France the entire period of the wars, 1640-1651. There he wrote his two major political treatises *De Cive* (1642) and *Leviathan* (1651) that were published immediately, unlike *The Elements of Law*. *De Cive* does not speak about revolution, although it repeats most of the ideas that *TheElements of Law* consists of. *Leviathan* offers a slightly different view of revolution compared to *De Corpore Politico*.

68 In *Leviathan* the term revolution refers to the current situation in England after the Civil Wars when the commonwealth of the England was about to establish. Hobbes writes:

> "And thus I have brought to an end my Discourse of Civil and Ecclesiastical Government, occasioned by the disorders of the present time, without partiality, without application, and without other design, than to set before men's eyes the mutual relation between protection and obedience; of which the condition of human nature, and laws divine (both Natural and Positive) require an inviolable observation. And though in the revolution of states, there can be no very good constellation for truths of this nature to be born under, (as having an angry aspect from the dissolvers of an old government, and seeing but the backs of them that erect a new;) yet I cannot think it will be condemned at this time, either by the public judge of doctrine, or by any that desires the continuance of public peace"[57].

69 Here Hobbes seems to understand revolution in two different registers. In the first register, he makes a connotation to the astronomical idea of revolution by pointing to the "constellation". Obviously Hobbes is talking about moment of birth of his masterpiece. He seems to understand that his book, which immediately caused wide controversies and threatened Hobbes's safety too, was not a kind of work that would get praise from its readers. In this way, *Leviathan* is a book "born under the bad stars" and the reason for the wrong constellation is the revolution of states, the English Commonwealth especially. The real reason for anticipated neglect of his work might derive from the fact that Hobbes sees that his "truths" might have favored the royalists more than the "democratic men" who now held power. This comment might be as well "an inconvenient truth" that Hobbes gives in his book generally: the peace is secured only by the strong state and sovereignty.

70 The second register is the fact that in *Leviathan* Hobbes sees revolution as some kind of breaking point. There are those who have dissolved the old government and those who are about to erect the new one. This idea of revolution is reminiscent of the very modern idea of revolution. Revolution is a breaking point, a sort of *kairos* that separates the old

era from a new one. At the end of the Civil Wars, Hobbes might have seen the new day rising and thought that the times had truly changed for good.

71 Hence in *Leviathan* the reader gets the picture that Hobbes uses the concept of revolution in a very modern way. Although throughout his book, he speaks about rebellion similarly to the way he expressed his thoughts in *The Elements of Law* and *De Cive*, revolution is used here in a way that the modern reader can recognize as a self-evident. However, this might be the wrong interpretation, since it is difficult to imagine how Hobbes would have suddenly started to promote "revolutionary" action, because he restated his distaste for rebellion in *Leviathan* in a similar tone as in The *Elements of Law* and *De Cive*. But on the other hand, something was surely different after the period of Civil Wars and the victory of Cromwell. The old regime seemed surely as history and it was a time of building up a new one. Perhaps Hobbes thought that his *Leviathan* would become a cornerstone of the new Commonwealth of England, even though he later clearly denied that he wrote the *Leviathan* in favor of Cromwellian regime[58].

2.3. *De Corpore* – An Astronomical Revolution

72 After Hobbes returned to England and published *Leviathan*, he faced true opposition to his thoughts from various directions. While the *De Cive* was a true success, especially on the continent, *Leviathan* was received with rage. This, among other reasons, might have turned Hobbes's head to other questions, mainly to scientific contemplations that he had begun already in France. The outcome of this project was his philosophical *summa*, *De Corpore*.

73 Although revolution is a rare concept in Hobbes's political texts, he was very familiar with the concept from his astronomical investigations. He knew it quite well from the astronomical discourses and used it naturally in his own texts concerning physics and astronomy. In this sense Hobbes returned to the origins of the concept of revolution, which he had used only metaphorically in his earlier political texts.

74 It is true that the concept of revolution was first an astronomical concept. As John Dunn writes, "The imaginative setting of the concept of revolution was initially provided by the development of theoretical astronomy"[59]. Hobbes, who names such scientists as Copernicus, Galilei and Kepler as important developers of physics and astronomy, has a very clear understanding how "revolutionary" the astronomical concept of revolution was. It must have been an important question, since Hobbes devotes pages to describing the mathematical laws of circular movement that is revolution[60].

75 The newly defined circular motion of planets was something that infuriated the Inquisition and cost the lives of many scientists. It was something that proved in the end that earth was not the centre of the universe but instead it was a planet that circled the sun. Proving circular motion in a theoretical way was a major task since it opposed the understanding of movement that Aristotle had given which had been the prominent way of describing physics among scholastics. This is not to say that Aristotle did not know of circular motion, but he understood it from the basis of a different metaphysics[61]. Circular movement was an essential part of Ptolemy's theory of different circular spheres that was dominant way of understanding the cosmos from antiquity to the late Middle Ages. What changed in astronomical revolution was in fact, among many other things, the very idea, or metaphysics of circular motion. Now circular motion proved that earth circles the sun, not the opposite as Ptolemy had suggested[62].

76 Hence, it is understandable that Hobbes found this very important and wanted to clarify the subject as he did in *De Corpore*. Hobbes seems to think that the revolution of a planet simply explains some things in the most truthful way. In this sense, if philosophy is understood as a political struggle over the concept of truth as Michel Foucault has suggested[63], Hobbes's astronomical theories were political *par excellence*: they participated in and supported new theories that were still radical at Hobbes's time, although they were widely known.

77 In *De Corpore* the word revolution appears several times. In chapter *XXVI of the world and the stars*, Hobbes gives the following example[64]:

> "The causes of different seasons of the year, and of the several variations of days and nights in all the parts of the superficies of the earth, have been demonstrated, first by Copernicus, and since by Kepler, Galileus, and others, from the supposition of the earth's diurnal revolution about its own axis, together with its annual motion about the sun in the ecliptic according to the order of the signs; and thirdly, by the annual revolution of the same earth about its own centre, contrary to the order of the signs"[65].

78 This example demonstrates how Hobbes understood the term revolution in the physical and astronomical context. Revolution is the same as circular motion; it is a route that a body makes. Some parts of our sense experience, Hobbes explains, are reliable while others not. This in fact was the very centre of the astronomical debate in the age of astronomical revolution: How on earth should we explain our sense experience to manifest something other than it manifests? This calls for a new thinking and new metaphysics that explain circular movement, among others things, in a new way. Hobbes participated in this new wave by explaining theoretically what circular movement, a revolution, was all about.

2.4. *Behemoth* – Revolution Coming Back

79 *De Corpore* raised controversies as well as Hobbes's earlier political texts, but mostly these debates were part of a new scientific discourse that took shape in England. A wider audience was not interested about the questions concerning the squaring the circle that caused a bad reputation for Hobbes in scientific and mathematical societies. After all the scientific debates Hobbes decided to write one more political text, the history of English Civil Wars, *Behemoth*.

80 *Behemoth* did not include any new political theory. Yet, *Behemoth* is not only a "history". It is also a normative study of the events between 1640-1660. In *Behemoth* Hobbes writes about rebellion, mutiny and the causes for the events of civil war. He also reflects on the possibilities of acting differently, that is, gives his advice to readers as to how one should act in those situations. At the very end of the book Hobbes concludes the dialogue by getting to the problem of revolution.

81 The major problem for Hobbes is that no one seems to have learned anything from the Civil Wars. Just before Charles II was put back in the throne, the situation in England was nearly the same as it was at the beginning of the war. The Rump parliament was almost the same as the parliament in 1640, except for those who had died. Most of the members of the parliament were Presbyterians. In Hobbes' words: "They had learned nothing. The major part was now again Presbyterian"[66]. History gives us a lesson, but sometimes that lesson is not understood. Hobbes states: "But I have not yet observed in the Presbyterians

any oblivion of their former principles. We are but returned to the state we were in at the beginning of the sedition"[67].

82 These examples show how Hobbes used the concept of revolution, taken straight from the astronomical discourse described in *De Corpore*, for his analysis on the English Civil Wars. The political power seemed to return to the original place where it had all begun. Nevertheless, this is only one part of the story. Another character of the dialogue, called A, denies this kind of revolution without progress. Something had changed, and this concerned the omnipotent power of the sovereign. Before the civil war, says Hobbes, the King had no simple rule over the militia. Now the parliament had decided that the King was the only one who had the rule over the militia. Even the parliament itself could not argue against the King if he chose to use his power. This act means, for Hobbes at least, that the same kind of propagandist and seditious movement inside the Commonwealth would not be possible again. The King now had something that Hobbes wanted it to have: the rule over militia, the power over force and violence. Hobbes's basic argument of power is that the sovereign must have the undeniable power, which can submit all the others under its power. This suggests that Hobbes sees some progress in the events of the civil war and in fact, that his own idea of the omnipotent sovereign power, and especially the power of monarch, is now properly established.

83 Nevertheless, in the very last lines of *Behemoth* Hobbes says something even more important concerning the concept of revolution:

> "I have seen in this revolution a circular motion of the sovereign power through two usurpers - father and son - from the late King to this his son. For (leaving out the power of the council of Officers, which was but temporary, and no otherwise owned by them but in trust) it moved from King Charles I to the Long Parliament; from thence to the Rump; from the Rump to Oliver Cromwell; and then back again from Richard Cromwell to the Rump; thence to the Long Parliament; and thence to King Charles II, where long may it remain"[68].

84 First, he calls the whole period of the English civil wars a revolution. Second, he characterises the movement of sovereign power a circular motion. Two important aspects arise from this. Hobbes writes as if the sovereign power really was something separate from the person who carries it. Here he undisputedly applies his own theory of sovereignty to the events of the Civil War. Nevertheless, he does not see any serious lack of sovereignty at any phase of revolution. He does not even claim that the form of sovereignty changed in some way at any point of revolution. This means that Hobbes sees the *same* body politic and its sovereignty existing continually during the revolution.

85 In Hobbes's view the English revolution, unlike the later French revolution, did not include an end of sovereignty and a beginning of a new one. Instead of this, the sovereignty moved from one person to another, and from one form of government to another, from one parliament to another. This is a very strong argument from Hobbes, considering that in the English Civil Wars the absolute monarchy had ended and the Commonwealth of England established. Hobbes denies any kinds of change of sovereignty. Applying Hobbes's own concepts to this case, this would mean that the social contract that in some phase of history had established The Kingdom of England did not vanish during the "rebellion".

86 Hence, in *Behemoth* we have two kinds of revolutions. The first one resembles the modern idea, or in some senses also the Christian idea, of revolution. It is a revolution where some kind of development happens. This idea differs radically from the views that Hobbes

presents in *The Elements of Law* or *De Cive*, or even in *Leviathan*. Obviously Hobbes's mind has changed, or at least he uses different kinds of rhetoric in *Behemoth*. The second concept of revolution is more traditional. It is possible to interpret the second as a classical idea of cycle of regimes, but in many senses it resembles still more the modern conception of revolution than old. What is different from both classical and modern versions of regime change is that here, in the second, revolution is simply a full circle. Sovereignty is a body that goes a full circle without losing its power. In fact Hobbes's metaphor reminds us of the seasons. The lowest of time, maybe a winter is obviously the reign of Cromwell. Instead the reign of King is the time of power and hope, a summer perhaps.

87 Whatever interpretations we give to Hobbes's conception of revolution in *Behemoth* it is clear that his views were developed from *The Elements of Law* and maybe inspired more from the ideas that he presented in *De Corpore*. The way that Hobbes uses the concept of revolution in *Behemoth* makes one wonder whether Hobbes tried, once again, to prove that his original theory of sovereignty was right. If the course of history would have proved in the case of *Leviathan* that his idea of sovereignty was a problematic one of what happens to the consistency of sovereignty during the regime change, the events after 1651 to 1660 instead made it possible to argue, that sovereignty did exist after all despite the regime change. This explanation was made possible because of the astronomical concept of revolution that seemed to fit the monarchy in other respects too. Be as it may, it seems that Hobbes's idea of revolution, regime change and consistency of sovereignty in *Behemoth* is very different from his earlier works. This time the political message to his audience seems to be that monarchy will survive despite the rebellion directed against it. Hobbes is not saying that this is some sort of law of nature, but he is not far from it.

Conclusions

88 Hobbes's conception of revolution is confusing and revealing at the same time. It is primarily based on the astronomical understanding of the early modern period. This could give more evidence for those Hobbes scholars, who hold *De Corpore* as the key to Hobbes's political works. But, even if one does not want to follow this line of interpretation, the fragments from his major works, especially *Behemoth*, prove that Hobbes really sees the English Civil Wars as a revolution. This conception of revolution is, however, in a complex and paradoxical relationship to the modern conception of revolution.

89 It is interesting how Hobbes seems to argue that in the revolution of the body politic, sovereignty remains constant throughout the revolution. In one sense the body politic even develops during the revolution: the original position where the sovereignty is attached to the King returns after negation, i.e. the phase where sovereignty was attached to the Lord Protector Richard Cromwell and the Rump Parliament. Hobbes argues that history teaches how a democratic commonwealth is not good for sovereignty, which belongs to the King. But revolution also involves some kind of development. The power shattered between the King and the Parliament, is now transferred in a military sense only to the King, as it should be, according to Hobbes's political thought. Old powers are not only restored, but also improved.

90 However, this viewpoint seems quite strange in the light of the evidence concerning the English Civil Wars. Since Hobbes does not see any true change in sovereignty and in spite of all the facts, he claims that the sovereignty lasted all the way through this revolution, he seems to stubbornly purport a view that the body politic lasts even through violent rebellions. His idea is at least controversial in historical terms, and it is perhaps in contrast with his own political theory too. According to the *The Elements of Law*, *De Cive* and *Leviathan*, Hobbes could claim that establishing the commonwealth of England and the killing of King Charles I destroyed the old sovereignty[69]. Instead he claims that nothing has changed profoundly. In a way his argument is very easy to understand in the context in which *Behemoth* was written. Hobbes approach seems to acknowledge that the true rupture or loss of sovereignty would somehow damage the existing sovereignty. For Hobbes it is important to state that traditional sovereignty of England is still working. This, if nothing else, proves that Hobbes was not a revolutionary writer in a modern sense.

91 It is also possible to claim that Hobbes changed his views as the political situation in England developed. In T*he Elements of Law* he seems simply to favour monarchy and states that rebellion will mean the total destruction of the commonwealth. This view on rebellion does not change along the way, but his view concerning the consistency of sovereignty develops. In *Leviathan* and especially in *Behemoth* Hobbes seems to argue, that sovereignty lasts throughout the changes that body politic is about to go. However, it is also possible that astronomical model of revolution that Hobbes introduced in *De Corpore* might have clarified his ideas concerning the regime change. It was now possible to state that regimes change but sovereignty stays and returns in the end to the monarchy in a developed and progressed form.

92 Nevertheless, it is difficult to deny that in some senses Hobbes wrote very revolutionary texts. While reading *De Cive* and *Leviathan* one can grasp how profoundly new his ideas of political order were in the 17th century. He seemingly calls for a change in the commonwealth, by which he does not only mean the new King or a new parliament, but a much more profound reorganization of everyday life. There are certainly radical and revolutionary elements in his political theory. On the other hand, when reading *Leviathan* and *Behemoth* it seems that Hobbes does not call for a revolution, but for peace. Bringing peace to the society is the fundamental theme of his writings and it seems that he is ready to convince people to obey whatever the legal sovereign commands. Naming the action that might be called a revolution, as rebellion, Hobbes makes a distinction between his political doctrine and those of his contemporaries. Killing the people or the King like the rebellious factions though does not solve the political problems[70]. Instead, the commonwealth is changed fundamentally by the right kind of *education*. There are some enlightened elements in Hobbes's teaching but violence is something that he does not admire. This certainly separates him from the post-French Revolution revolutionaries as well as those who rebelled at his age. If revolution means, in our common understanding, a violent regime change, it is very hard to accord with Collins who suggests that Hobbes supported "revolutionary" action of his age. Certainly he supported reforms, but as we have seen, "revolution" was not an option for Hobbes.

93 Hobbes stands at an interesting threshold between ancient and modern political thought. Interpreting his writings concerning rebellion in *The Elements of Law* reveals that he wanted to distinguish his theory from the ancient ideas of generation and transformation of political regimes. Unlike Plato, Aristotle, Polybius or even Machiavelli, Hobbes says

that the change commonwealth is about to go through is totally a human product. Processes of transformation do not start because some cosmological era is about to end, but because men are acting and moving in certain ways. Some of these processes might be unwanted and negative. This usually happens when people do not have a proper political philosophy or analysis of human behaviour when they start to change society i.e. do politics. However, social and political change does not exist because of cosmological laws or trans-historical reasons. Building a perfect commonwealth takes time, because after all Hobbes is a determinist and a materialist. One phase of society rests on another: an Eldorado cannot be built in a desert unless a good watering system is built first. Hobbes does not either believe that the Plato's idea of the right types of people, or their virtuous personality, would somehow solve the political problems of the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth should order persons, not the other way around[71].

94 This article has tried to open up the paradoxical connection to the concept of revolution in the context of the English Civil Wars. I have used two kinds of approaches in my reading. The first one was an applied conceptual history and the second one an analysis of political theory.

95 Firstly, through the analysis done in the manner of conceptual history it has become evident that the concept of revolution is heavily loaded by the contemporary, or at least modern, historical and political imagination, not least because of the idea of great modern revolutions such as the French revolution and the October's revolution. Our concept of revolution does not definitely grasp the connotations that it had before. For us, the French revolution is a paradigm of modern revolution. With a very good reason, it can be claimed that the concept of revolution does not belong to the political vocabulary and imagination of the political action in the modern sense before the French revolution[72] . In our understanding the revolution means the period of radical political change, which permanently transforms the power structure and social hierarchy of the society. Hence, although the revolutions, as we now understand them, have always occurred, it is not self-evident that we should call wars of religion and the several civil wars in Europe revolutions. Perhaps we should try to understand that these wars were different in their nature, that they were perhaps more chaotic and unstructured than modern revolutions (whether modern revolutions are structured, that's another question). Quite different subjects were involved in these wars: a people was not yet a political concept, that could unify and organize the lower social classes as a political subject. There certainly were no classes involved in the modern sense of the word. All these reasons, as shallowly as they are presented here, make it reasonable to doubt just a little bit the use of the concept of revolution when writing about the English Civil Wars.

96 Secondly, an analysis from the perspective of political theory has revealed other sides of the concept of revolution, which were discussed trough Hobbes's philosophy. Generally, the concept of revolution had a specific meaning in the early modern period. It simply meant *re-volvo*, the coming back or returning of a planet to its original starting place in the radar. It could be said that the concept of revolution of the early modern period has more to do with the revolver (a gun) than the political revolution in the modern sense.

97 However, the word "revolution" was also used in the political vocabulary. The proper meaning of revolution before, and perhaps in some cases after, the French Revolution was the idea of revitalizing the degenerated political order. Here the emphasis is not a permanent change, but instead in a change in the sense of recovering the original position of the political power. This original position was seen as a point of political

potentiality and capability. The idea of revolution suggested that it is possible to return to the original position, to the original constitution of the state. Degeneration was the enemy of political regimes and revolution was a means to put back the original order.

98 On a general level my claim has been that the English Civil Wars should not be treated as a revolution without a critical aspect to the very concept of revolution itself. Nevertheless, I am not saying that it would be totally wrong to speak about the English Civil Wars as a revolution. In this article I have tried to show how a contemporary of the English Civil Wars, Thomas Hobbes, understood revolution in his political theory. Hobbes's conception of revolution is certainly not as simple as we would want it to be. In fact, the analysis shows, that Hobbes does not have a clear idea of the concept's *political* meaning, which is striking since Hobbes is otherwise very aware of the concepts that he uses. It is also clear, that the concept of revolution does not play a very positive or future oriented role in his writings. There is however a glimpse of conceptual innovation in Hobbes's usage of the concept of revolution. He certainly combines the old and new components, as Deleuze and Guattari would say, of rebellious action, regime change and astronomical discourse to explain the political changes. What comes to the concept of revolution, he simply fails the make it ready for political usage, but he certainly develops it. Hence, in more general level, it is important to analyze this confusion that Hobbes, and perhaps others of his contemporaries, had while the whole English political, economical and social system was undergoing great changes. After all it is the historical obscurity, not clarity that should interest us in the first place.

NOTES

1. See for example Reinhart KOSELLECK, *The Practice of Conceptual History*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, 2002; Reinhart KOSELLECK,*Futures Past*, Columbia University Press, New York, 2004; Terence BALL, James FARR and Russel L. HANSON (eds.), *Political Innovation and Conceptual Change*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1989.

2. James FARR, "Historical Concepts in Political Science: The Case of « Revolution »", *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 26, No. 4, 1982, p. 688-708.

3. See recent histories of English Civil Wars for example Michael BRADDICK,*God's Fury, England's fire. A New History of the English Civil Wars*, Penguin, London, 2009 and Blair WORDEN, *The English Civil Wars: 1640-1660*, Phoenix, London, 2010; and some recent Hobbes studies, Luc FOISNEAU,*Hobbes et la toute-puissance de Dieu*, PUF, Paris, 2000 and Philip PETTIT,*Made With Words*, Princeton University Press,Princeton, 2009.

4. See Quentin SKINNER, *Visions of Politics. Volume 1. Regarding Method*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2006, especially chapter "Motives, intentions and interpretation", p. 90-102. Here Skinner accuses so-called post-structuralist thought of abandoning the search of intention, and even meaning, of an author. It is true that Barthes, Foucault and Derrida questioned the importance and possibility of searching for a true intention of some past author, but there seems to be some misunderstandings with Skinner's interpretation, which is not possible to analyze here.

5. Ibid.

6. See for example Terence BALL, James FARR and Russel L. HANSON (eds.), "Editors Introduction", in *Political Innovation and Conceptual Change*, op. cit., where they point out some essential features of the aims and purposes of conceptual history.

7. A good example of a somewhat problematic conceptual history is Richard Tuck's articlewhich certainly is a good conceptual history in spite of the fact that it ends up claiming such things about Hobbes and Aristotle that more careful philosophical reading do not allow (See Richard TUCK, "Hobbes and Democracy", inA. S. BRETT & J. TULLY (eds.), *Rethinking the Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2007).

8. However, the true benefit of conceptual and contextual history is that they avoid the universalistic nature of modern science that may provide rather difficult and misleading typologies that combine different historical elements and events without any sensitivity to special conditions and nature of particular events. In the case of revolution, see for example the article from Raymond TANTER and Manus MIDLARSKY, "A Theory of Revolution", *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 11, No. 3, 1967, p. 264-280, as an example of this kind of "trans-historical" method.

9. See Gilles DELEUZE and Félix GUATTARI, *Qu'est-ce que la philosophie ?*, Les Éditions de Minuit, Paris, 1991 (especially chapter 1). In *Mille Plateaux*, it is difficult to point out the exact definition of the concept of the concept, but the way they use the concepts throughout that particular book is very innovative in conceptual sense (Gilles DELEUZE and Félix GUATTARI, *Mille Plateaux*, Les Éditions de Minuit, Paris, 2001).

10. In fact, most of the recently published lectures at the College de France resemble a conceptual history: Michel FOUCAULT, *Le Gourvernement de soi et des autres I (1982-1983), II (1984)*, Gallimard/Le Seuil, Paris, 2008 and 2009.

11. Reinhart KOSELLECK,*Futures Past*, op. cit.

12. Koselleck writes that "the term 'revolution' indicates upheaval or civil war as well as long-term change, events, and structures that reach deep into our daily life" (Ibid., p. 43.).

13. See for example John ADAMSON, "Introduction: High Roads and Blind Alleys – The English Civil War and its Historiography", in John ADAMSON (ed.), *The English Civil War: Problems in Focus*, Palgrave MacMillan, New York, 2009; Michael BRADDICK, *God's Fury*,op. cit.

14. See John MORRILL, *Oliver Cromwell and the English Revolution*, Longman, London & New York, 1991; E.W. IVES, *The English Revolution 1600-1660*, Edward Arnold, London, 1968. See also Ashton who uses the terms revolution and revolutionary, but argues that the Civil Wars was mainly due of the conservative people who defended the old ways against the innovative kingship of Charles I that started the rebellion. (Robert ASHTON, *The English Civil War. Conservatism and Revolution 1603-1649*, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, London, 1979).

15. See Christopher HILL, *The Century of Revolution 1603-1714*, Routledge, London and New York, 2006 (1961).

16. Jeffrey R. COLLINS, *The Allegiance of Thomas Hobbes*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2007, p. 6-7.

17. Johann P. SOMMERVILLE, *Thomas Hobbes. Political Ideas in Historical Context*, MacMillan, London, 1992, p. 1-17.

18. John BOWLE, *Hobbes and his critics*, Frank Cass & Co. Ltd, London, 1969, p. 52.

19. Jeffrey COLLINS, *The Allegiance of Thomas Hobbes*, op. cit., p. 278.

20. Ibid., p. 69-70.

21. John ADAMSON, *The English Civil War*, op. cit., p. 1-23.

22. See Max WEBER, *Economy and Society*, University of California Press, Berkeley CA, 1980, chapter "Bureaucracy".

23. Tawney's ideas were criticized in W.C. Sellar's and R.J. Yeatman's book *1066 and all That* in 1930 (See J. ADAMSON,*The English Civil War*, op. cit., p. 7-13).

24. Thomas HOBBES, *Behemoth or The Long Parliament*, Chicago University Press, Chicago, 1990, p. 126; *Leviathan*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1998, p. 210, 223; *The Elements of Law*, in *The English Works IV*, Elibron Classics, 2005, p. 200-212.

25. Thomas HOBBES, *Behemoth*, op. cit., p. 2-4.

26. Ibid., p. 3.

27. Ibid., p. 4.

28. As C.B. Macpherson has argued, Hobbes's idea of the state of nature is in fact a description of the civil war in England that is, the fall of the sovereign authority (C.B. MACPHERSON, *The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism. Hobbes to Locke*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1975, p. 19-29).

29. As John Dunn notes, following Hatto (1949), "Before 1789 there was no word in any world language which carries the meaning of the modern word "revolutionary" (the intentional agent of revolution); and the word "revolution" (which figures in a variety of European languages) was in no sense an important instrument of political understanding" (J. DUNN, "Revolution", in BALL, FARR & HANSON (eds.), *Political Innovation and Conceptual Change*, op. cit., p. 334-335). Dunn says that Condorcet was perhaps the first who used the concept of *révolutionaire* in *Journal d'instruction sociale*, June 1, 1793 (Ibid., p. 335, footnote 2).

30. Reinhart KOSELLECK, *Futures Past*, op. cit., p. 47-48.

31. Thomas HOBBES, *De Corpore politico*, in *The English Works I.*, Elibron Classics, 2005, p. 77.

32. *The Elements of Law* was a manuscript that was not supposed to ever be published. *The Elements* is the basis for later works *De Cive* and *Leviathan*. All three books share almost the same ingredients although there are variation and differences with all these three texts. For a comparison of similar parts of these three books, see J.C.A. GASKIN, "Introduction", in Thomas HOBBES, *Human Nature and De CorporePolitico*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1999). This reading here is a special reading of *Elements of Law*, although I have provided some references to similar parts in *De Cive* and *Leviathan*.

33. See PLATO,*Republic*, translated by Paul SHOREY, The Loeb Classical Library, London, 1963, Book VIII.

34. For the political mayhem that Alcibiades caused in Athens and Sparta, see PLUTARCH,*Lives I*, translated by John LANGHORNE and William LANGHORNE, Nabu Press, 2010. For the life of Pericles, see also PLUTARCH, Ibid.

35. See PLATO, *Phaedrus and Letters VII and VIII*, translated by Walter HAMILTON, Penguin Press, London, 1990.

36. See ARISTOTLE, *Politics*,translated by H. Rackham, The Loeb Classical Library, London, 1959.

37. See Friedman Goldstein's article that demonstrates how Aristotle saw inequality and oppressive governments as a cause of revolution, and that Aristotle's view of the causes of revolution are in fact quite near the ones Locke presents in *Two Treatises on Government* and in *Letter Concerning Toleration* (Friedman GOLDSTEIN, "Aristotle's Theory of Revolution: Looking at the Lockean Side", *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 54, No. 2, 2001, p. 311-331).

38. Reinhart KOSELLECK, *Futures Past*, op. cit., p. 45; John DUNN, "Revolution" in op. cit., p. 335.

39. PLATO, *The Statesman*, translated by Harold N. FOWLER, The Loeb Classical Library, London, 1952, p. 49-65; see also Pierre VIDAL-NAQUET, "Plato's Myth of the Statesman, the Ambiguities of the Golden Age and of History", *The Journal of Hellenic Studies*, Vol. 98, 1978, p. 132-141.

40. POLYBIUS, *The Histories I-VI. Volume III*, translated by W.R. PATON, William Heinemann Ltd, Harvard University Press, London, 1972, p. 275.

41. Ibid., p. 289.

42. This view is promoted especially at the beginning of *Politics*. In *Politics* Aristotle writes, "From these things therefore it is clear that the city-state is a natural growth, and that man is by nature a political animal" (ARISTOTLE, *Politics,* translated by H. RACKHAM, The Loeb Classical Library, London, 1959, p. 1253a).

43. Reinhart KOSELLECK, *Futures Past*, op. cit., p. 49-57.

44. Augustine states this ontologically in his *Confessions* while saying that: "If, then, time present — if it be time — comes into existence only because it passes into time past, how can we say that even this is, since thecause of its being is that it will cease to be? Thus, can we not truly say that time *is* only as it tends toward nonbeing?" (AUGUSTINE, *Confessions*, Oxford World's Classics, Oxford, 2008, book 11, paragraph 14).

45. Hannah ARENDT, *On Revolution*, op. cit., p. 16-18.

46. The revolution of state-forms is analyzed specially at the Machiavelli's (2009) first book, paragraph two.

47. Paul-Erik KORVELA, *The Machiavellian Reformation*, Jyväskylän yliopisto, Jyväskylä, 2006, p. 77-83.

48. Ibid., p. 80-83.

49. See for example the debate between Richard Tuck and Kinsh Hoekstra (TUCK, "Hobbes and Democracy", in op. cit.; HOEKSTRA, "A Lion in the House: Hobbes and Democracy" in BRETT & TULLY (eds.), *Rethinking the Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2007). See also controversial interpretations of Hobbes's writings such as Martel, who in certain respects claims Hobbes to be a radical democrat (James MARTEL, *Subverting the Leviathan* , Columbia University Press, New York, 2007).

50. Thomas HOBBES, *De Corpore*, op. cit., p. 138-139.

51. Thomas Hobbes, *The Elements of Law*, op. cit., p. 141.

52. Ibid., p. 201.

53. Ibid., p. 209.

54. Ibid., p. 212. This same story is repeated, with even more clarifying words: "In the manner in which once upon a time (as the story goes) the daughters of *Pelias*, king of Thessaly conspired with *Medea* against their father. Wishing to restore a decrepit old man to his youth, they cut him in pieces by the advice of *Medea* and placed him on the fire to cook, in the vain hope that he would be rejuvenated. In the same manner the mob [multitude] in their stupidity, like the daughters of *Pelias*, desiring to renew their old commonwealth and led by the eloquence of ambitious men as by the sorcery of *Medea*, more often split it into factions and waste it with fire than reform it (Thomas HOBBES, *On the Citizen*, Translated by Richard TUCK, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2003, p. 140-141).

55. For modern connotations of the concept of revolution, see John DUNN, "Revolution" in op. cit., and Reinhart KOSELLECK, *Futures Past*, op. cit.

56. Hobbes states in *Leviathan* that when people are living in the state of nature and hence, the state of war, they do not have a proper understanding of time (op. cit., p. 84).

57. Ibid., p. 475.

58. In his *Considerations Upon the Reputation, Loyalty, Manners, And Religion, of Thomas Hobbes of Malmesbury, Written by Himself, by way of Letter to a Learned Person (John Wallis, D.D.)*, in *The English Works IV*, Elibron Classics, 2005, he writes that: "To that other charge, *that he writ his Leviathan in defence of Oliver's title*, he will say, that you in your own conscience know it is false. What was Oliver, when that book came forth?" After explaining the position of Cromwell in relation to his book he says that: "Then primarily his *Leviathan* was intended for you masters of the Parliament, because the strength was then in them" (p. 420).

59. John DUNN, "Revolution", in op. cit., p. 333.

60. Considering Hobbes's theory of circular motion see Hobbes, *De Corpore*, op. cit., p. 287-332.

61. Aristotle explains the circular motion in many texts such as *On The Heavens, Meteorologica*, *Metaphysics* and *Physics*. *On the Heavens* he states "circular motion must be primary. That which is complete is prior in nature to the incomplete, an the circle is a complete figure, whereas no straight line can be so" (ARISTOTLE, *On the Heavens*, translated by W.K.C. GUTHRIE, Harvard

University Press, London, 1960, p. 15). Generally concerning Aristotle's relation to early modern physics and metaphysics see Alexandre KOYRÉ, *From the Closed World to the Infinite Universe*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore and London, 1980, p. 17-23.

62. About the new astronomy and new metaphysics in the age of astronomical revolution see KOYRÉ, Ibid., p. 28-87. Koyré notes that it was indeed Nicolas of Cusa with his *De Docta Ignorantia* who started the metaphysical critique of aristotelic-ptolemaic cosmos (Ibid., p. 5-27, and Giuseppe BUFO, *Nicolas de Cues ou la métaphysique de la finitude*, Editions Seghers, Paris, 1964).

63. See Michel FOUCAULT, *Sécurité, territoire, population. Cours au Collège de France. 1977-1978*,Paris, Gallimard / Le Seuil, 2004.

64. Another, similar example can be found from the chapter *XXI of circular motion*. Here Hobbes states that: "Coroll. From hence it is manifest that those two annual motions which Copernicus ascribes to the earth, are reducible to this one circular simple motion, by which all the points of the moved body are carried always with equal velocity, that is, in equal times they make equal revolutions uniformly" (HOBBES, *De Corpore*, op. cit., p. 320).

65. Ibid., p. 427-428.

66. Thomas HOBBES, *Behemoth,* op. cit., p. 202.

67. Ibid., p. 203-204.

68. Ibid., p. 204.

69. In *Leviathan* Hobbes formulates that: "Though nothing can be immortal, which mortals make; yet, if men had the use of reason they pretend to, their commonwealths might be secured, at least from perishing by internal diseases. For by the nature of their institution, they are designed to live, as long as mankind, or as the laws of nature, or as justice itself, which gives them life. Therefore when they come to be dissolved, not by external violence, but intestine disorder, the fault is not in men, as they are the *matter*, but as they are the *makers*, and orderers of them" (op. cit., 212). Little later he gives another formulation: "Lastly, when in a war (foreign or intestine,) the enemies get a final victory; so as (the forces of the commonwealth keeping the field no longer) there is no further protection of subjects in their loyalty; then is the commonwealth DISSOLVED, and every man at liberty to protect himself by such courses as his own discretion shall suggest unto him. For the sovereign, is the public soul, giving life and motion to the commonwealth; which expiring, the members are governed by it no more, than the carcase of a man, by his departed (though immortal) soul. For he that wants protection, may seek it anywhere; and when he hath it, is obliged (without fraudulent pretence of having submitted himself out of fear,) to protect his protection as long as he is able. But when power of an assembly is once suppressed, the right of the same perisheth utterly; because the assembly itself is extinct; and consequently, there is no possibility for sovereignty to re-enter" (op. cit., p. 221). See similar chapters in *The Elements of Law* (op. cit., p. 200-212) and *De Cive* (*On the Citizen,* op. cit., p. 131-141).

70. In *De Cive* Hobbes states that: "How many Kings, themselves good men, have been killed because of the one error that a Tyrant King may be rightfully put to death by his subject? How many men have been slaughtered by the error that a sovereign Prince may be deprived of his kingdom for certain reasons by certain men? How many men have been killed by the erroneous doctrine that sovereign Kings are not masters but servants of society? Finally, how many Rebellions have been caused by the doctrine that it is up to private men to determine whether the commands of Kings are just or unjust, and that his commands may rightly be discussed before they are carried out, and in fact ought to be discussed?" (op. cit., p. 8-9.)

71. Of course, it can be stated that Plato's aim was the same: a polis should educate its leaders, not the other way around.

72. Hannah ARENDT, *On Revolution*, op. cit.; Reinhart KOSELLECK, *Futures Past*, op. cit.

ABSTRACTS

La dénomination des Guerres civiles anglaises est un objet de débat entre historiens depuis l'époque des faits eux-mêmes. Selon les inclinations politiques de chacun, elles ont tour à tour été appelées "la Révolution puritaine" (*the Puritan Revolution*), "la Grande Rebellion" (*the Great Rebellion*), ou tout simplement "les Guerres civiles anglaises" (*the English Civil Wars*). Cependant, une autre question, plus problématique, enrobe la terminologie de ces événements.
Tandis que certains historiographes les envisagent comme une série de ruptures au sein de la société anglaise, d'autres qualifient la période toute entière de révolution. Toutefois, le concept de révolution n'existait pas au XVII[e] siècle – du moins pas dans son sens contemporain. Le recours aux outils de l'histoire conceptuelle, appliqués au concept de révolution présent dans la théorie politique de Thomas Hobbes, permet de poser des questions fondamentales à l'historiographie des Guerres civiles anglaises. En particulier, il est possible de s'interroger sur les recherches consacrées à Hobbes qui envisagent les Guerres civiles anglaises comme une révolution et le voient comme un auteur révolutionnaire. Cet article entend adopter une approche plus sensible de l'histoire des idées politiques qui admette la fluctuation du sens des concepts historiques.

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Mots-clés: Thomas Hobbes, Guerres civiles anglaises, Révolution, Histoire des concepts, Historiographie

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